

Fuel Oil News

February 2012



2012 Tanker Review

Top 20 UK distributors

BP – a wholesale commitment



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A BWOC tanker built by Feldbinder and operated by Turners (Soham) has taken the title of Fuel Oil News 2011 Tanker of the Year. See page 14.

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EDITORIAL

Top dogs among the dragons

The season of *darling you were wonderful* awards is upon us once again with a flurry of BAFTAs, Golden Globes and Oscars. Not to be outdone, this month sees not one but two Fuel Oil News awards – the 2011 tanker of the year and the top 20 UK distributor list.

There are no prizes for guessing who is this year's top dog in national fuel distribution. GB Oils - which last year celebrated only its 10th anniversary on the UK mainland - remains top of the list. Querying the company's dominant position at the end of last month were the residents of Stornoway who raised a petition calling for an investigation into pricing by distributors. The petition, which attracted 1500 signatures, has been lodged with the Scottish parliament.

At number 16 is WCF Fuels with whom Fuel Oil News writer Liz Boardman recently had

a *Brief Encounter* – see pages 10/11. 'Fiercely independent and proud of it' the company - which has been in existence for 100 years - is owned by 3800 private shareholders, several of whom are employees.

Well done to all those in the top 20 - with fuel distribution's attendant small margins, price volatility, credit issues etc – how many feel they would be able to convince a BBC dragon to back their company today?

Taking the 2012 tanker of the year title is BWOC, now part of the Mabanafit Group – a relative newcomer to the UK - that has breathed some fire into wholesale fuel supply.

With *Blue Monday* (23rd January) safely out of the way and the year of the dragon just starting - don't let this balmy winter weather put out your fire!

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2012 Tanker Review

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In Brief

- S **IP Week 2012** opens on **Monday 20th February**. The theme of the opening conference is **New frontiers, new future**. The Week offers an opportunity to understand the future of the oil and gas industry, hear from industry leaders, network with potential clients and meet service providers. **Bob Dudley**, BP chief executive will speak at the dinner with secretary of state for energy, **Charles Hendry**, addressing lunch guests. www.energyinst.org/ip-week



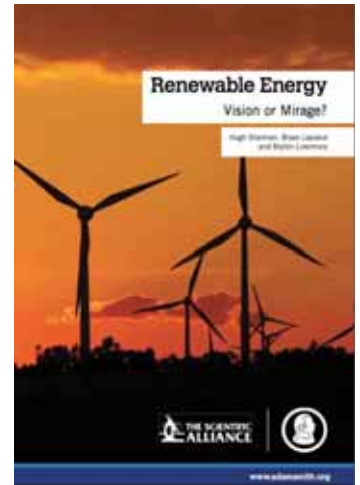
Bob Dudley



Charles Hendry

- S Check out the latest quarterly oil statistics at www.decc.gov.uk/assets/decc/11/stats/publications/energy-trends/3943-energy-trends-section-3-oil.pdf
- S The consequences of poorer downstream margins, closure of refineries and changes in the ownership of assets will be among the topics discussed at the **Argus Crude and Products Forum**. The forum takes place at the Sheraton Park Lane Hotel, London on **Tuesday 21st February**. seana.lanigan@argusmedia.com

- S The strengths of the **UK's offshore oil and gas** safety and environmental protection regime have been acknowledged. But 'there is still scope for further reducing the risks of incidents occurring' says professor Geoffrey Maitland, a physical chemist at Imperial College, who with a panel of experts has assessed the industry. Regulators and industry will consider the panel's findings in detail and report back to Charles Hendry in July.
- S From 1st February, the consolidation of ExxonMobil Fuels Marketing Company and ExxonMobil Lubricants & Petroleum Specialties Company into **ExxonMobil Fuels, Lubricants & Specialties Marketing Company**, became effective. **Alan Kelly**, former president of the latter is now president of the consolidated company. Raised in the UK, Mr. Kelly, 54, was born in Iserlohn, Germany, and holds a bachelor's degree from Bristol University. www.exxonmobil.com
- S **BP**, one of the biggest foreign investors in Russia, has introduced a new corporate social responsibility programme there. The \$50 million programme will run until 2015 offering a range of technology, education and culture projects designed to bolster research and skills in the energy sector. www.bp.com



- S The **Renewable Energy: Vision or Mirage** report was published at the end of last year by the Adam Smith Institute and the Scientific Alliance. Martin Livermore, joint author of the report, said: "The facts actually show that current renewable technologies are incapable of making a major contribution to energy security and – despite claims to the contrary – have only limited potential to reduce carbon dioxide emissions." www.adamsmith.org

Aviation fuel

- S **Shell** has opened a state of the art tanker jetty at London Gateway; the site will deliver a quarter of all aviation fuel to airports in south east England from Stansted-le-Hope, Essex. Shell's business development manager, Rachel Crocker, said: "We import two million tonnes of aviation fuel a year through this facility. This project has created a legacy for the UK that will secure jet supplies for many years to come." London Gateway is owned by DP World, one of the world's largest marine terminal operators.
- S By the end of the decade, Sir Richard Branson, **Virgin Atlantic** founder says that half the fuel used by airlines could be from sustainably sourced biofuels. He was speaking at the launch of **RenewableJetFuels.org**, a website rating around 40 companies producing green aviation fuels based on their economic viability, scalability and sustainability. www.RenewableJetFuels.org

- S **Lufthansa** says the difficulty of sourcing sufficient sustainable jet biofuels could end trials. The airline, which has just undertaken its first biofuel-powered transatlantic flight, has already completed 1187 domestic flights between Frankfurt and Hamburg using a 50/50 blend of regular fuel and biosynthetic kerosene in one of the plane's engines, saving an estimated 1471 tonnes of CO₂ in the process. www.lufthansa.com



New appointments

On 1st January **Andrew Shilston**, former chief financial officer at Rolls-Royce Holdings, joined the **BP** board as a non-executive director.

Carl-Henric Svanberg, BP chairman said: "Andrew has deep financial and City experience together with industry experience from his time with Enterprise Oil and Cairn Energy." www.bp.com



Harrow-based independent forecourt operator, the **Motor Fuel Group (MFG)** was acquired recently by a new management team. Headed by chief executive officer, William Bannister, the team is to appoint **Jeremy Clarke** as managing director. Jeremy will join MFG once his contractual obligations to Murco Petroleum are fulfilled. MFG operates 58 sites under the BP, Shell, Esso, Total and Jet brand. www.motorfuelgroup.com



Company Fuel Cards has appointed **Helen Henderson** as manager of its new contact centre in Southport. Helen, who has a BA in marketing, started her career at Croft Fuels and has worked with some of the north's key service providers in the fuel card sector. www.companyfuelcards.co.uk



Previously accountable for all BP's non-US refineries, **Patrick Dixon** has been appointed as expert chair of the **Office of Carbon Capture and Storage (OCCS)**. The role, within the Department of Energy and Climate Change, is for a two-year period and carries responsibility for providing strategic and expert guidance to ministers. www.decc.gov.uk/en/content/cms/emissions/ccs/occs/occs.aspx

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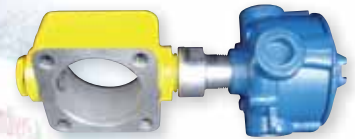
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In brief

- S The use of **biofuels in transport** rose from 1% of total road transport fuel supply in 2007/8 to 3.33% in 2010.
- S In late December, the UK published an update on progress to source **15% of all energy from renewable sources by 2020**. In this financial year, companies have announced plans for almost £2.5 billion worth of investment in renewable energy projects in the UK, with the potential to create almost 12,000 jobs. www.decc.gov.uk/en/content/cms/meeting_energy/renewable_ener/re_roadmap/re_roadmap.aspx
- S A core feature of the new **Green Deal** will be the 'free and cheap insulation' now available to low income households from energy suppliers and the Warm Front scheme. This year, energy suppliers will be required to spend up to £250 million – 40% more than last year – to assist the poorest pensioners and other vulnerable people. Under the new Warm Home Discount scheme around two million homes will get discounted bills. www.decc.gov.uk/en/content/cms/.../green_deal/green_deal.aspx



- S **Kingspan Environmental and Clarehill Plastics** are confirmed among the sponsors for October's **Oil & Renewable Energy Show**. With the very latest in oil-fired heating and renewable energy technologies on show at Manchester Central, the show presents an ideal opportunity to learn more about the best renewable technologies to combine with oil-fired heating. See also page 19. www.oilandrenewableheatingshow.co.uk
- S A new **waste wood power plant** is to be built in Yorkshire. The 53MW power station at the former RAF airfield at Pollington, will be fuelled by 360,000 tonnes of waste wood per annum and power around 55,000 homes per year.

Feedstock will be delivered to the site via the Aire and Calder navigation canal.

- S **RWE npower** started commercial operations at Britain's biggest **biomass power station** at Tilbury in Essex at the end of last month, when the third of three units at the 750-megawatt power plant started producing power.

Erratum – page 6 January issue. In the article Spring forward, fall back? The figures of \$75 and \$69 in the paragraph beginning 'Of course, this is below figures seen in mid 2008... should be £75 and £69.

A contradiction?

"I enjoyed reading the Chandlers update in the January issue," writes Donall O'Connor of Value Oils. "It was generally informative and interesting. However, I would point out what I personally consider to be a contradiction in terms."

Certain companies are bereft of aspiration to create profit and that's to the detriment of every other business in the industry.....I think the way some have priced over the last three to four years showed a complete lack of understanding of the market..... 95% of this industry could enjoy steady and profitable growth achieved by means other than constantly cutting into margin.

"There would be a general consensus with regard to these sentiments amongst oil distributors," says Donall.



The Chandlers article goes on to say:

As a national online supplier, I believe that Boilerjuice is still the best offering. It's a good sound business. Chandlers remains on the list of suppliers to Boilerjuice.

Donall commented: "This is an endorsement of a market leading price comparison website, which has attracted



much high profile criticism of the fuel oil industry. I believe that heating oil price comparison websites have been the greatest influence in driving modest margins to levels that are unsustainable in the long term.

"In summary, I find it difficult to see how the author can reconcile the above two statements."

If you have a comment to add, please email jane@fueloilnews.co.uk

February update

Back in September 2010, Portland wrote about the problems facing European refiners, as high crude costs and ruinous refinery margins were strangling the industry. Unfortunately these dire warnings came to a head in January 2012, when Petroplus, Europe's biggest independent refiner (and owners of Coryton) had their \$1bn credit line removed by the bank. Petroplus' share price immediately plummeted 40% but more significantly, their ability to buy crude oil in sufficient volumes was removed.

Refineries without crude oil rarely function well (!), so Petroplus immediately shutdown three of its 5 European refineries – Petit Couronne in Northern France, Antwerp in Belgium and Cressier in Switzerland. Furthermore, production in the remaining two refineries – Coryton (UK) and Ingolstadt (Germany) – was reduced to circa half capacity.

Independent refiners v integrated operators

Whilst the predictably painful consequences of this fall-out will now be felt across Europe, Portland is left to wonder why another independent refining company has seemingly hit the skids. Just like Tosco before them in the USA, Petroplus hit the scene in a blaze of cash, with high value headline deals, aggressive acquisitions and seemingly no fear of taking on the big boys. Sadly and also like Tosco, Petroplus looks like it may not stand the test of time.

To understand why these independent refiners have not flourished, is to go back to the very basis of the original oil multinationals and their decision to have "integrated" operations. Integrated operations meant that the likes of Exxon, BP and Shell would have an "upstream" part of the business, that got the crude oil out of the ground, a "midstream" part that would refine that crude oil and a "downstream" part that would sell the crude oil, once it

was refined. The basis behind this was an attempt to balance revenue and profits, irrespective of which way the oil price went. When crude oil prices were low, feedstocks for the refinery would be cheap and as a result, the ability to make higher margins on refined products much more significant. The opposite would be true when crude prices were high. Refinery feedstocks would be expensive and so margins tight. But during those periods, the integrated oil majors would still be happy because their crude oil (unrefined) would fetch much higher prices on the open market. Happy days!

So Petroplus' failure is arguably simple to understand; in short, they are not integrated. As crude oil prices have risen higher and higher, so refining margins have been squeezed relentlessly. With no crude oil to sell and only those squeezed refinery margins to rely on, Petroplus' cards were surely marked? Possibly yes, but more likely the problems for Petroplus were those of geography and the nature of the local European market – both of which were not on Petroplus' side.

refineries or the refining hub of Singapore; these areas are not struggling with margin because demand for refined products is strong and accelerating. As long as demand for refined fuel increases, then refinery margins will be handsome. But in Europe (where all Petroplus refineries are located), demand for fuel is consistently falling year on year, as the effects are seen of energy efficiency, environmental legislation and more recently, the downturn in the economy. So unlike in Asia, where demand is running away from supply, European margins are generally rotten.

“

in Europe demand for fuel is consistently falling year on year

“

Even with high crude prices, refinery margins can still be attractive if the local market is robust enough to cope

Even with high crude prices, refinery margins can still be attractive if the local market is robust enough to cope. Conoco clearly think so as they embark on their new "Phillips 66" venture, which is after all, a brand new standalone mid/downstream operation! Or look at the new Indian

A final unpalatable truth is that the Petroplus group has been making eye-watering losses for quite some time and has always been a leveraged company with high levels of debt. In the end, the oil industry is no different to retail, banking or even national debt. When creditors get twitchy, they stop lending, cancel the IOU and ask for their money back...



For more pricing information, see page 30

Portland Fuel Price Protection
www.portland-fuel-price-protection.com



A refining, crude supply and quality seminar in partnership with Wood Mackenzie will be held on Tuesday 21st February during IP Week.
www.energyinst.org/ip-week



Simon James (r) with wholesale colleague Alan McCann

Making a wholesale commitment

As majors continue to withdraw from the downstream market, Fuel Oil News was keen to quiz BP about its position within the UK's wholesale market.

To this end, FON recently met with Simon James, who has held the position of wholesale negotiator at BP for just over a year. Simon's role involves maintaining and building existing business as well as identifying and developing new business opportunities.

What is BP's position in the UK's wholesale market?

A recent strategy review has looked at BP's wholesale business within the context of its larger UK organisation, and concluded it to be a good fit.

"Currently, BP is a relatively small player in the wholesale market," Simon told FON.

"However, following the review we believe we've identified what needs to be done to enable us to compete more effectively in this market. In the past, we probably expected to extract higher margins than were possible which impacted on volumes. We're now looking at wholesale in a slightly different way; of course, making a profit

is still important but, we see many other benefits to doing this business other than pure margin.

"As well as ensuring the operational efficiency of our infrastructure, having a wholesale arm enables us to improve cost build-ups and ensure assets are fully optimised. The business naturally complements our nationwide network of 1200 service stations and strategic supply locations at Hemel Hempstead, Northampton, Kingsbury, Hamble and Belfast. (With the exception of Hemel, all supply kerosene.)

As other majors withdraw from the UK's downstream sector, how does BP see its role?

"We see ourselves as being in a great place to take advantage of others' divestments in UK downstream. Our strong supply chain and import locations give us a competitive advantage.

Having sold its last UK refinery to Petrochina/INEOS where does BP now source product?

"As the first major to divest its UK refineries – Coryton and Grangemouth – it was a brave

move and, it has taken awhile to adjust from an integrated refiner/marketer to become more of a pure play retailer and an importer/purchaser of product. Of course, BP does still operate one of Europe's largest refineries – Rotterdam refines 400,000 barrels of crude per day."

BP has also divested non-core terminals – Aberdeen and Inverness to GB Oils, Dalston to INEOS and the Isle of Wight to MRH.

Who are BP's main customers?

"We deal with a variety of customers both spot and contracted. We've a good mix of business both new and long-term and we're currently getting a number of enquiries from prospective customers looking for long-term security of supply.

Does BP see a long-term commitment to the downstream sector and, if so, why?

"Retail is a tough environment and we still see many of our competitors reviewing whether to stay or go. That said, we're firmly committed to the UK downstream market – we've

spent a number of years ensuring that our service stations are the right sites in the right locations. BP's strong retail brand name is now backed up by our relationship with Marks & Spencer's Simply Food and our own Wild Bean cafes. Add to this our Nectar points loyalty scheme and our Ultimate premium grade fuels and, we have one of the strongest offers in the marketplace.

"As a further demonstration of our continued commitment to the UK market, we're making a significant investment in an exciting new storage project on the Thames at Canvey Island. This will enable our London-based supply and trading team to import product into the south east before using the UKOP pipeline to move this product inland at competitive rates. We see this as an excellent opportunity to better support our existing business and, a strong base from which to develop new business.

Repositioning and gaining new business

"Although it's true to say that BP probably didn't react as quickly to market changes as it could have, today, we're excellently placed to take advantage of this changing market. With the option of both importing and purchasing from third parties, we're in a great position to offer customers competitive prices for quality products from first class facilities with a reliable supply. Market changes have unsettled people who've previously had long-term relationships with their supplier and we're already gaining new business as a result. BP is definitely in the wholesale market place and keen to do business."



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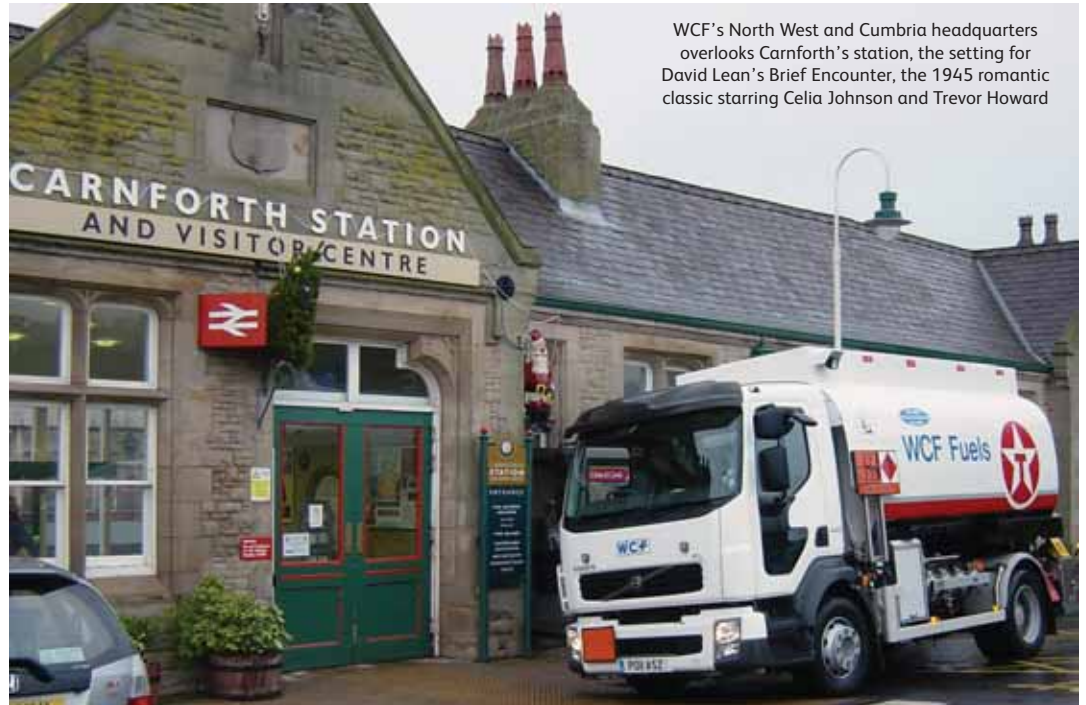
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Nestled in the heart of the Lancashire countryside, a mere stone's throw from Carnforth station, which famously provided the setting for the 1945 film, Brief Encounter, lies WCF's North West and Cumbria fuels division. Fuel Oil News recently met up with finance director, Jo Ritzema, North West general manager, Dave Spencer and commercial manager, Lynn Casson, at the company's Carnforth depot

Employee matters

Founded as a farmers' co-operative in 1911, the company was incorporated in 1988 and celebrated its centenary in style with a party last May. 100 years on WCF remains fiercely independent and proud of it.

The company is owned by 3800 private shareholders, including many employees, which as Jo pointed out, is unusual in the UK for a non public organisation. "All of our employees are shareholders and encouraged to have shares, under the various schemes that we offer. Last year every employee received a bonus of £1500 in shares. It's important to us that there's a very strong element of employee ownership. It gives employees a sense of belonging and demonstrates to them that their opinions are valued."



WCF's North West and Cumbria headquarters overlooks Carnforth's station, the setting for David Lean's Brief Encounter, the 1945 romantic classic starring Celia Johnson and Trevor Howard

A brief encounter with WCF

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TOP 20 FUEL OIL DISTRIBUTOR

Across the business, WCF employs approximately 250 people, around 50 of whom work in the company's fuels businesses. "Staff retention is high," says Jo. "This is partly down to our culture and partly down to location." Proving the point, Jo has worked at WCF for 8 years, whilst Lynn has been there for 18 and Dave 23 years.

Experience counts

Following the removal of the default retirement age in October, the company is keen to retain drivers over 65. "It's definitely an advantage to have older drivers in the business," comments Jo. "Their local knowledge and existing customer relations are invaluable. It may be the case

that an older driver is happy to work over the winter but would prefer the summer off to spend time with family, and we're happy to accommodate that sort of request. The only downside, from a business point of view, is that the removal of the default retirement age, makes it very difficult to plan ahead."



Commercial manager, Lynn Casson with general manager, Dave Spencer and transport manager, Ian Billington

Geographical spread

The company consists of two main divisions; retail and specialised distribution, which includes fuels. WCF's fuels sector operates from three main regions, all of which are run autonomously, each with its own general manager; North West (which covers South Lancashire to the Scottish Border, from the Irish Sea to the Pennines, as well as Wensleydale and Swaledale); North East (which encompasses Hexham and Northumberland, as well as the Tyne, Wear and Teesside areas) and Eastern (which primarily caters for the Yorkshire, Humberside and Lincolnshire areas, but also extends as far as Peterborough and into the Midlands).

With depots in Boston, Pocklington, Immingham, Carlisle, Carnforth, Hawkshead, Peterlee, Gosforth and Hexham, and more than 1.5 million litres of storage nationwide, the company is well placed to cater for its wide spectrum of customers. Across the three regions, the company operates in the domestic, retail, agricultural, commercial, industrial and marine sectors.

Currently, the company operates 32 tankers, which are normally leased on an 8 year basis, from a number of different companies. "We made an operational decision to lease, rather than buy tankers, as it gives us more flexibility,"

explains Jo. "Often though, we'll buy the tankers at the end of the lease period, if they have performed well."

Whatever the weather

Like many other distributors, the severe weather last winter caused problems for WCF, but Dave said: "I can't think of one person that we let down. The weather was terrible but we got through it because of our fantastic staff and drivers. Our drivers didn't give up, even in the most badly affected areas, and on a couple of occasions, tankers got stuck and damaged." Lynn echoed this: "Communication is extremely important to us. We never put the phones on voicemail during working hours and we always get back to people to keep them up to speed with their deliveries."

Indeed, it is the customer contact that makes WCF and the fuel distribution sector as a whole, an attractive place to work: "We have a variety of different customers and a good level of contact with them in the office. It's very much a localised industry and as a result, we get to know our customers well. We get lots of indirect, positive customer feedback from our drivers," says Lynn.

When asked what is the biggest headache in the industry, Dave had to think hard: "Probably the uncertainty



Celebrating more than 100 years in business

of supply from the refineries. We get more outages than we would like. Fuel is also way too expensive." For Jo it is the sheer number of people competing in a small area. "Fuel distribution is a mature market and innovation is difficult. We need to make sure we are better than the competition."

Moving with the times

In order to expand its customer base, compete with other firms and offer buying flexibility, the company has an online presence. In addition to individual websites for each separate region, which allow customers to order oil and

manage their accounts online, WCF also operates www.fuelfighter.co.uk. "Fuelfighter is not a huge resource," says Jo "but we wanted to have an additional internet presence for those customers who prefer to order their fuel online."

Looking ahead: "We're aiming for steady growth," says Jo. We are focussed on increasing our customer base, in what is a huge geographical area. Although we're always in the market for acquisitions that add value to the company, we do have to be realistic that there is normally excess competition for those businesses that do come onto the market."



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Consols rejects “clawback” proposal

As a keen supporter of initiatives to make fuel affordable to all users, Consols Oils has steadfastly stuck to its principles by refusing to abide by new terms and conditions laid down by a former customer from the property lettings sector.

The former customer recently wrote to Kevin Bennetts, managing director of Consols Oils, notifying him of “proposed changes to our arrangements”.

The letter stated: “In line with the terms of our lettings agreements with our landlords with managed properties, we act to instruct contractors on behalf of our landlords and, as such, obtain various quotations and base our selection not on price alone, but on quality and value of service with our client best interest foremost.

“Currently we have maintained this service free of charge, unlike the majority of our competitors. Unfortunately, due to the financial climate, and restrictions imposed by our competition within the market place, we can no longer provide a contractor referral service, with preferential

contractors, without making a clawback of our staff time, management, organisational time, and bank costs and management time during the entry, and BACS or cheque payment service to contractors.”

The letter then goes on to say that the company were therefore introducing a “referral administrative charge”. That charge had been set at 10% which would be deducted from the contractor’s invoice prior to payment.

“Uplift your quotations”

In the letter to contractors, the company’s “partnership accountant,” said: “I understand that this may require you to uplift your quotations based on the fact that we will be making a 10% deduction direct from you, and hope that we can continue to do business to the mutual benefit of both of our organisations.”

However, when Kevin Bennetts read the letter, he described the proposal as unethical. In his letter of response, Kevin wrote: “It is neither practical nor indeed

ethical for us to uplift prices by 10% in order to cover any commission element in a transaction.”

He continued: “Whilst past business is appreciated, it will be totally impractical for us to work together in the future on the terms you require, as the proposed commission closely approximates to our gross margin on the products supplied.

“Additionally, it is our absolute policy never, under any circumstances, to offer any form of financial incentive whatsoever in order to obtain or secure business.

“Therefore, it is with great regret that I respectfully suggest you test the market elsewhere as there may be another supplier willing to comply with your requirements.”

Kevin told Fuel Oil News: “In my opinion, such a proposal is bordering on the corrupt. 10% is around the gross margin on the fuels we supply, and I would certainly not consider adding an extra 10% to our prices as a pay-back to a company who merely recommends our excellent service. It really would not be fair to the end customer.”

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TOP 20

FUEL OIL DISTRIBUTORS: UK MAINLAND

2012	2011	Company	Number of tankers
1	(1)	GB Oils	*800
2	(2)	Watson Petroleum	300
3	(3)	Butler Fuels	*191
4	(4)	Goff Petroleum	110
5	(6)	NWF Fuels	90
6	(5)	Pace Petroleum	*87
7	(7)	Rix Petroleum	76
8	(8)	Johnston Oils	54
9	(9)	Highland Fuels	40
10	(10)	Fuel Oils Holdings	38
=11	(12)	Gleaner Oils	37
=11	(13)	Linton Fuel Oils	37
13	(11)	Chandlers	36
14	(=17)	WP Group	35
15	(14)	Carrs Billington	33
16	(-)	WCF Fuels	32
17	(15)	Ford Fuel Oils	30
18	(16)	Barton Petroleum	26
=19	(=17)	Mitchell & Webber	25
=19	(-)	Heltor	25

- The companies occupying the top four positions in 2011 remain the same this year.
- The GB Oils* figure does not yet include the tankers of recent acquisitions, Butler Fuels and Pace Petroleum. An amalgamated figure (1078) would see Samuel Cooke (19th in 2011) and Hingley and Callow (20th in 2011) back in these same positions this year.
- Moving up the list are the WP Group (three places) and Linton Fuels Oils (two places). New entrants to the 2012 list are Heltor and WCF Fuels.
- As previously, companies are ranked by number of tanker, compiled from data supplied to FON by readers.

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Reynolds
 TRADE CREDIT

A successful partnership

A BWOC tanker has claimed the title of Fuel Oil News Tanker of the Year 2011. The tanker was entered jointly for the title by **BWOC** and **Turners (Soham)** which operates the winning tanker on the former's behalf

In a joint statement both companies said: "We were pleased and proud to have won this title. It not only confirms to the market our commitment to continually look at ways to improve the impact of supply on the environment, but also demonstrates the strengths of working closely with a professional logistics partner.

"Working alongside the main equipment suppliers, **Feldbinder** and **Gardner Denver**, enabled a better understanding of the customer's requirements and the implementation of new innovations."

Efficient and practical

The resulting design has delivered an efficient, practical and quality-build 44-tonne gvw urban arctic tanker. Its design optimises the volume, length and height of this special 39,000 litre 5-compartment tanker, all of which has been achieved with

an unladen weight of 6600kgs.

A dramatic reduction in CO₂ emissions has also been achieved via the vehicle's specification. Compared with historic conventional urban designed vehicles, its low tare weight gives maximum efficiency with more product carried per litre/km reducing miles travelled and fuel used. Fuel consumption has improved due to reductions in tyre wear and road surface damage and, on cut-in on turns as a result of better manoeuvrability.

Innovative and fully equipped

Fitted with all the latest technology from Gardner Denver, fuel is delivered by hose or bulk with TSO approval for metered deliveries at 800 litres per minute with automatic data transfer after point of sale.

Equipped with BPW axles complete with drum brakes, the tanker also includes

a hydraulic rear steer axle using the ESVE system enabling the trailer to follow the same path as the tractor unit. This system, which has prompted a very positive response from drivers, gives increased manoeuvrability allowing the use of longer length trailers in areas where access is restricted. The tanker is particularly useful for negotiating areas where narrow roads, small roundabouts and tight corners make the use of conventional articulated vehicles difficult.

Three of these tankers are now being operated across the country. FON asked if there were plans to add more to the fleet. "Both Turners and BWOC are continually looking together at new technology to meet the needs of our customers and I am sure there will be more innovative vehicles in our fleet in the years to come."



Fuel Oil News 2011 Tanker of the Year

Keeping the customer satisfied

Despite a general economic downturn affecting the majority of UK industry during 2011, the tanker sector seems to have fared better than most, with relatively healthy order books for new vehicle manufacture and sales, and buoyant business in leasing and rental.

But the one common factor shared by the vast majority of companies who have reported a successful year, and are looking forward to 2012 with optimism, is the vital importance they attach to fair pricing and first-class customer service.

By going that extra mile for new and regular customers, companies are ensuring satisfaction, loyalty – and future orders. As one tanker supplier put it... “a happy customer is a future customer. An unhappy customer costs you money!”



The tankers shown here were just some of those supplied to satisfied customers in 2011. If your company is taking delivery of a new tanker(s) this year, please remember to send a photograph and details to Fuel Oil News.



Feldbinder UK
Special Transport Systems

Feldbinder are delighted that our new urban artic fuel tanker has been selected as tanker of the year!

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The special 38000, 5 compartment urban artic tanker delivers metered fuel by hose or bulk delivery. The tanker is fitted with all the latest technology from Gardner Denver, and is approved by TSO for metered deliveries at 800 litres per minute.

The tanker is equipped with BPW axles complete with drum brakes and includes a hydraulic rear steer axle using the ESVE system.

The design optimises the volume, length and height of the tanker and all this has been achieved with an unladen weight of 6600kgs.



Feldbinder UK Ltd.

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Distributors'



In a state

Spotted on a recent walk – the state of this oil pipeline marker certainly does not bode well for the rest of the infrastructure!

Charitable men with moustaches

Thirteen members of the Fuelcard Company team joined in the Movember campaign raising £300 for men's health charities including the Prostate Cancer Charity and the Institute of Cancer Research.

"Movember is a fantastic campaign and the staff were more than happy to showcase their impressive facial-hair growing capabilities to support a worthy cause," said sales and marketing director, Jakes de Kock. uk.movember.com



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Diary by Wildcat

Over a barrel

At the end of a recent business trip to the USA, Matthew Gilmore and Terry Johnston of the Maine Tanker Group took time out to visit Niagara Falls. The pair had been visiting the company's American suppliers – Betts Industries, Veeder Root and TCS Meters. "When Canadian customs decided not to grant us entry to Canada, we went over the falls in a barrel," joked Matthew.

A barrel of laughs for Matthew and Terry



2012 Tanker Review

Find out what other tanker companies have been up to on pages 22-27.



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Providing service with a smile...

With a company slogan, “*more smiles per gallon*”, Northern Ireland based Thompson Fuels has established a reputation as a happy and helpful team, willing to go the extra mile (and smile!) for customers.

The company has evolved during the years. It was established in 1968 to provide a coal delivery service. Ten years later, the family business diversified into oil sales, starting off with one oil delivery lorry and one employee. Thompson Fuels was registered as a limited liability company in 1993, although it remained a truly family-run business – as it is today, with three sibling directors: Mark, David and Aaron Thompson.

Since then, the customer base has steadily grown. The company now has 15 tankers and a full-time staff of 30, operating out of five depots. For its domestic customers alone, Thompson has an annual throughput of more than 20 million litres.

considerable – covering an approximate 20 mile radius from each of its five depots, located in Tandragee, Portadown, Banbridge, Markethill and Fintona, as well as Belfast and the surrounding areas.

Responding to market demand, Thompson has also diversified into selling lubricants and has recently become a Maxol lubricant agent. “We also retail decorative garden stones for flower beds and rockeries during the quieter summer months,” continues Aaron. “And we still maintain a successful coal sales department, which we have developed and grown over the years – from importing and packing our own stock, to supplying retailers and carrying out our own delivery and cash ‘n carry services which we operate out of all our depots.

Emergency run-out service

“Our depots also operate an ‘emergency run-out drum’ service, which has proved to

be very popular with the public; they tell us this is very convenient as they can get as much or as little as they need.”

It has always been part of the company’s ethos to provide the service – and a little more – expected by its customers. “As distributors with a reputation for providing a dependable service to the public, we have to be able to adapt and cope with anything – especially when demand is at its highest during the winter months,” says Aaron. “With a reliable, competent staff – and storage capacity in excess of one million litres – we are well equipped to meet public demand, regardless of winter weather conditions.

“We always try to encourage our customers to buy early in the winter, before the cold weather sets in. However, it doesn’t always happen. We find that most customers now tend to buy as and when they need it.”

Aaron believes that the oil distribution industry has changed over the years, becoming a lot more competitive due to the constant fluctuation of oil prices. But, with so many years experience in the sector, he is philosophical about the future. “As a business, we believe you have to be competitive, but not at the cost of profitability,” he says.

“We don’t get distracted by what our competitors are doing... we are focused on our own business and concentrate on giving our customers top quality fuel and service at the best possible price! And by doing exactly that, we provide our customers with more smiles per gallon!”

www.thompsonfuels.com



Thompson Fuels now operates 15 fuel delivery tankers out of five depots – including three recent additions to the company fleet. The company’s two new DAF tankers were purchased from TBF Thompson, and the Iveco tanker from NI Trucks. All the tankers were built by Lionel McNiece of Markethill, Armagh.

“We strive to maintain a modern fleet of lorries with well trained, motivated staff,” says Aaron Thompson. “As you can imagine, our business has changed considerably over the years – from coal and bottled gas deliveries being our original main lines of business, to oil fired central heating fuels taking over. However, how things change... coal sales have significantly increased again in recent years.”

Although the company focuses on domestic customers, Thompson also deals with both commercial and agricultural clients. And the Thompson “patch” is



Thompson Fuel’s frontline staff, going that extra mile for customers. Left to right, they are: Cheryl, Ann, Syrena, Stephanie, Katy, Ethel and Paul

Toxic waste uncovered

Five tonnes of “highly toxic waste” – the by-product of diesel laundering – has been uncovered at an illegal fuel site in south Armagh.

HM Revenue & Customs (HMRC), accompanied by police officers, dismantled the plant, which was hidden in a large corrugated shed on farmland in the Drummond Road area of south Armagh. Officers seized tanks, pumps and equipment along with a fuel tanker and 20,000 litres of illicit fuel.

HMRC estimates that the plant had been capable of producing nearly eight million litres of illicit fuel a year, evading over £5m in revenue.

Graeme Anderson, assistant director of specialist investigations for HMRC, said: “The toxic sludge from the laundering process has the potential to cause devastation to our environment. Buying illicit fuel isn’t about saving a few pence; it is encouraging and supporting fuel criminality in our communities and the dumping of toxic waste, leaving the public with a hefty clean-up bill.”

Two men are currently helping HMRC with their enquiries whilst investigations continue.

Oil buy that! Your business – on a plate...



For Sale: 14 year old Peugeot van. Never raced nor rallied. Just 400,000 miles on the clock. A snip at only £600... Well, perhaps not.

However, what DOES make this an interesting proposition is the van’s registration number. The number plate reads “OIL 8572” which is easily transferrable on to any other vehicle – whether it’s to personalise the MD’s limo or the company’s trusty oil delivery tanker!

The bright red van – complete with enticing plate – is being sold by Eamon Smyth of Roslea Oil Services in Co Fermanagh, Northern Ireland. Its MOT expires at the end of February, but, says Eamon, the vehicle is still going well, even though the next notch in its history is half a million miles! Eamon can be contacted at:

es@terawattltd.com



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Vopak has confidence in biofuels

Vopak has repeated its 2011 forecast and has said it expected improved demand for biofuels, after uncertainty in the market at the beginning of last year had led to a profit warning

Last April, Vopak lowered its 2011 profit outlook, citing uncertainty in the biofuels market that marred robust demand for its oil storage services. However, company shares rose to an all-time high during November at €39.24.

Vopak chief financial officer, Jack de Kreij, predicted that, with increased demand for biofuels, and unchanged demand for chemicals and oil storage, up to 95 % of the company's current capacity could be put to use.

Vopak's occupancy rate in the third quarter of 2011 was 93 %, compared to 92 % one year earlier. The company is expecting a 2011 operating profit – before depreciation and amortization, and excluding exceptional items – of between €600-€640 million.



Vopak services the market through three strategically located marine terminals in London (pictured), Teesside and Windmill (South Wales) with a total capacity of 720,000m³ of storage

Vopak, which currently operates 27.2 million m³ of storage capacity in 31 countries, says projects under construction will add 6.2 million m³ of capacity by 2014.

Essar markets toluene direct to UK customers

Essar Oil has begun to market toluene to UK distributors and large customers from its Stanlow refinery which the company recently acquired from Shell.

Toluene is a minority product of Stanlow, which produces approximately 15 % of UK fuels, principally diesel and petrol. The refinery has a capacity of 14 million metric tonnes per year, equating to 296,000 barrels per day.

Toluene has a diverse range of applications. It has been used to fuel

turbo F1 racing cars and is now widely used as an octane booster in petrol, as a chemical intermediate, and as a solvent in manufacturing. Stanlow is capable of producing enough of the product to meet the UK's total demand.

Volker Schultz, chief executive officer of Essar Oil UK, said: "We see significant potential for the toluene market in the UK, and we have the necessary flexibility at Stanlow to increase production from our current levels if we see economic value."

The Stanlow refinery, the UK's second biggest, was acquired from Shell by Essar Energy, in August 2011. Essar plans to continue manufacturing toluene to the same specification as previously, with direct distribution being carried out through various distributors – principally Brenntag UK, Caldic UK, Alcohol and Univar. Until the end of December, Essar was under contract to sell its Stanlow-produced toluene to Shell.

Storage and terminals wall map

The 2012 storage and terminals wall map was sent to all readers with the January issue of Fuel Oil News.

Extra copies of the wall map are available at £5 each plus postage and packing. A framed copy is also available at £20 plus postage and packing.

Every care is taken to ensure that details on the wall map are as up to date as possible. Should an omission or error be found, please call Sandra Curties on 01565 653283.

With 2012 already shaping up to be an interesting year in the world of storage and terminals, Fuel Oil News welcomes comment from readers about the challenges faced and the impact those challenges will have on the downstream market. peter@fueloilnews.co.uk



Operating costs at all-time high

The high cost of fuel remains the biggest cause for concern for logistics providers, according to the Freight Transport Association's (FTA) *Manager's Guide to Distribution Costs 2011* report.

The report, which was released last autumn, calculated that, on average, vehicle operating costs for rigid, articulated and drawbar vehicles have reached an all-time high, rising by 6.2% in the last year. The largest contributory factor was the increase in the price of diesel, which rose by 13.9% in the year to 1 October 2011. Tyre costs have also risen by 8.3% and overheads by 5.6% in the same period. Conversely, haulage rates only rose by approximately 2.8% in the nine months to 1 October 2011 with 45% of contributors reporting no increase in haulage rates since the start of 2011.

FTA research analyst, Bruce Goodhart, commented: "Commercial vehicle operators are under intense pressure from their customers to suppress haulage rates, at a time when the cost of running a truck has risen inexorably with fuel prices nearing record levels. This squeeze has left balance sheets fragile and carriers vulnerable during a period of weak economic growth."

YouTube showcases the latest technology

Reynolds Logistics has joined forces with TouchStar Technologies to create a video, showcasing onboard fuel delivery technology. The case study demonstrates the use of TouchStar's onboard technology during a typical day in the life of a Reynolds Logistics delivery driver. The video highlights all aspects of the delivery lifecycle- from initial back office input to driver pre-shift checks, collating POD information through to end of day checks. Reynolds Logistics has been using the solution across the UK and Ireland for over 10 years.

Chief executive officer, Andrew Reynolds, explains: "The need to run an effective and efficient distribution operation is critical. The video case study highlights how we are using state of the art fuel delivery solutions to provide exemplary service to our end users."

"Our fuel delivery solutions are designed to increase productivity, improve accuracy, and save time for companies. The case study was a perfect example of how a company has utilised this to deliver real time value and benefits to their end users," added Jim Austin, sales director, Touchstar Technologies. The case study can be seen at <http://youtube/ANxbLycZmWA>



Reynolds is using state of the art fuel delivery solutions



Tankshare expansion

Tankshare, the award-winning spot hire fuels distribution service, was launched into the West Country last month. Owners Suckling Transport will operate the service from Avonmouth and Westerleigh terminal.

Tankshare already operates in Scotland and the south east where customers include Andrew Gray and Co, Coryton Advanced Fuels, Gleaner Oils, Henty Oils, Mabanaft, Onward Fuels, Rix Petroleum, Scottish Fuels and World Fuel Services.

shaun.rees-brown@sucklingtransport.co.uk

Concerns over Driver CPC

Following on from the article Bad press for Driver CPC, in the August 2011 issue of Fuel Oil News, further concerns have been raised over the logistics industry's reluctance to invest in compulsory driver training.

Despite industry figures showing a sharp spike in the number of drivers embarking on Driver CPC training in the first half of 2011 – the number of drivers active on the Driving Standards database rose sharply to over 410,000 at the end of June – the Freight Transport Association (FTA) reports that companies are finding it hard to reconcile the cost of training against already stretched budgets, especially when they could be training drivers who may not be working for them by the 2014 deadline.

Book now, train later?

James Firth, head of road freight and enforcement policy, said: "The widely reported lack of engagement from industry isn't simply about companies burying their heads in the sand and hoping it'll all go away. We wouldn't be surprised if canny companies adopt a lower risk strategy of booking up their training modules now for drivers to embark on nearer the deadline date.

"Unfortunately, there's no provision in the current database for separating out passenger and HGV drivers. With the passenger deadline getting closer, it's likely that the spike is largely due to the PSV sector picking up the pace.

"Current intelligence suggests that a number of qualified HGV drivers will be well short of the 35 hours mark approaching the 2014 deadline. What this will almost certainly mean for those who haven't yet begun the process is a lack of choice, especially when it comes to finding good value, quality training."

GRW invests in UK operation

Since the end of 2010, **GRW UK** has been assembling its UK products in Middlesbrough. Head of UK operations, Lee Tipton explains: "We searched long and hard for the right assembly facility and it took us some time to find the best solution. We can now offer much improved lead times, without compromising quality. We're also giving something back to the economy by investing our assembly into UK labour."

"We've also moved to a new facility in Derbyshire, which houses our dedicated stocks of captive and vendor spare parts. We can now offer our captive components directly and exclusively, at more competitive prices and improved response times. This is all part of our refreshed commitment to offer the best service levels and first class quality products".

GRW Engineering's head office is

situated in Worcester, South Africa, with additional offices and workshops in Johannesburg, Cape Town and Rotterdam. GRW Engineering builds world class quality products, including aluminium, stainless steel and mild steel road tanker trailers, rigids and drawbars, suitable for liquid fuels, solvents, chemicals, black products, edibles and liquefied petroleum gas.

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Lakeland – proud to be British

“Having supplied more than 500 trailers into the marketplace to date, **Lakeland Tankers** is the preferred choice of the country’s most prestigious fleets,” says the company’s sales executive, Doug Watts.

“With large orders from DHL, Morrisons, Texaco, GB Oils and Suckling Transport, 2011 was a really good year in terms of sales and, there’s potential for 2012 to be another successful and busy year,” adds Doug.

The West Midlands-based semi-trailer tank manufacturer is proud to be British. The company has full UK manufacturing capability and, alongside sister company Road Tankers Northern (RTN), supports continual product investment. www.lakelandtankers.co.uk



Another busy year for Lakeland sales executive, Doug Watts

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RTN – innovation and accreditation

“We achieved ISO 9001:2008 accreditation last year, demonstrating our desire to galvanise existing procedures,” says sales manager, Brian Edwards. The company has also been awarded a prestigious six-figure government initiative grant, aimed at encouraging competition in Europe and expanding the workforce.

Semi-trailer tank redesign

“We’re constantly working to improve product design and reduce manufacturing costs. A recent R&D project with Sheffield Hallam University resulted in the redesign of our semi-trailer tank, making it more aerodynamic, reducing drag and improving fuel consumption.” Following the Valley Tankers acquisition in 2007, the company has also started to manufacture environmental service tankers.

Sales executive, Nick Heath has completed his first year in the business, during which time he has been instrumental in introducing new ideas and technology.

“As the UK’s largest tanker builder, we always endeavour to accommodate customers’ needs,” adds Brian. Bearing testament to this is the recent addition of three new tanker bays dedicated to service, repairs and tank testing together with a mobile tank test unit for visiting customers’ premises which are already proving popular.





A 20,000 litre tanker built for Mitchell & Webber in 2011

Rigid tanker and trailer hire



RTN and sister company Lakeland Tankers enjoyed an excellent 2011 and have a healthy outlook for 2012. “Rigid tanker and trailer hire has continued to grow steadily, helping us to remain profitable in a very competitive market. We offer both long and short-term rates which are particularly popular and useful whilst vehicles are undergoing accident repair or refurbishment.” www.rtnltd.co.uk

Meet the RTN team at FPS EXPO – see page 29.

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Tasca – exciting plans

Tasca Tankers has unveiled exciting plans to move to new company-owned premises this year. “This should allow further improvement in build excellence and enhanced facilities for our staff and customers,” explains Shaun Harte.

Although 2011 was a challenging year for the company, Shaun points out: “Q3 and Q4 pushed the total build numbers up again – quite considerably. With margins being squeezed by market demands and increased material costs, improvement in production performance was critical for a successful year. We feel that we’ve achieved this, and continue to offer our customers best value, while retaining our hard won reputation for quality.”

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Haartz – the right tanker on the right basis

Wirral-based **Haartz Tankers** prides itself on providing customers with the high-quality tanker to best suit the specific purpose. And the company's bespoke and personal service extends to the package on which the customer requires the vehicle – outright purchase, a lease agreement, or a flexible rental arrangement.



Haartz tanker trailers all come with pumps and are in two categories – a standard six-compartment tank or a bulk tank with a choice of one or two compartments. This one was built by GRW Engineering

As a consequence, Haartz uses its vast experience in the tanker market to act as the catalyst to offer the customer the right vehicle, featuring the right equipment, on the right basis.

Haartz Tankers is an independent company specialising in the sale, lease and rental of tankers for the fuel, powder and waste transport industries. The company's rental fleet – now totalling 65 units – includes both rigid tankers and tanker trailers, and during 2011 Haartz also supplied new and used tractors and rigid trucks to customers on an outright purchase basis.

Haartz tanker trailers all come with pumps and are in two categories – a standard six-compartment tanker or a bulk tanker with either one or two compartments – rated to carry fuel products and ethanol. In November, Haartz added new tankers of both types to its fleet.

Director, Tim Heaton, says: "We've pooled our knowledge and experience of road tankers with major manufacturers and leading service providers across the country, to enable our customers to enjoy a first class service package – quality tankers with quality service. We're committed to delivering that extra mile – the one that keeps our customers returning to us!

"We specify and supply tankers to fit the exact needs of our customers and provide a variety of packages to suit all requirements, including finance, leasing, rental and service." See also page 11.

www.haartztankersales.co.uk



The standard specification of a Haartz rigid is a six-wheel, four-compartment tanker with rear steer. This Volvo joined the Haartz fleet in November

Tough times, but flexibility wins the day

The related businesses of **PSS Workshops** and **D&B Tanker Services** have both experienced pressure during 2011, and, although the two companies have been flexible enough to cope with market conditions, they expect the situation to remain very similar during 2012.

In the tank hire business, customers of Ellesmere Port-based **D&B Tanker Services** have been constantly reviewing their requirements, with some moving towards shorter, but more frequent, rental periods. "But, because of our own flexibility in helping customers meet their business needs, we have been able to ensure the fleet has been virtually fully rented out throughout the year," says director, Mike Doyle. "We anticipate the same pattern will apply in 2012," he predicts.

On the maintenance and repair side, a number of **PSS Workshops'** customers have been running fewer miles, thereby extending their service intervals. Other customers have reduced the number of vehicles they are operating. "However, the shortfall this has produced in workshop hours has been more than offset by additional work from other existing customers and from a number of new customers," adds Mike. "Indeed, we have recently taken on a new fitter to help meet the overall demand. But given the economic forecasts for 2012, whilst we would obviously welcome any additional new work, we do not anticipate significant new volumes."

www.dbtankerservices.co.uk

WTS – bespoke tanker solutions

Yorkshire-based **Williams Tanker Services (WTS)** is well into its second decade of involvement in the road tanker industry.

Initially providing specialist electrical and small engineering services, WTS has rapidly developed to become a major UK tank and trailer supplier, working alongside such international brand names as CIMC Burg Group, and O.ME.P.S. (Italy), for both of which the company is sole UK agent.

“Our growth is exceeding targets, led by a strong business plan that is always evolving,” says WTS’s Ian McArdle. “We’ve built a reputation amongst our customers for achieving an innovative transport solution which fulfils their individual requirements.”

Specialist hire fleet

Apart from providing equipment from a standard build list developed over many years of experience, WTS also offers customers a bespoke, custom-made solution – from road tankers, skeletal trailers and box vans, to refrigeration units and tippers.

However, WTS also has a specialist hire fleet, comprising general purpose fuel and chemical tanks, LPG and vacuum tanks, foodstuff tanks, and tipping and non-tipping powder tanks.

“We can offer short term spot hire and long term contract hire, both with or without maintenance,” continues Ian McArdle. “We pride ourselves on our diverse range of services and capabilities, and because of this, WTS has built trading relationships with some extremely strong brands across the UK, Europe and North America.”

www.williamsts.com

Maine – a new partnership

2011 ended well for **Maine Tankers** with tankers ordered by **Nicholl (Fuel Oils), Blackmore Fuels, JH Irwin & Son and Moorland Fuels**. A new European partner for barrel supply and complete builds not only increases Maine’s capacity but, also gives the company the foothold needed to expand its Truflow pumping/metering equipment both at home and abroad. With the new partnership comes a wider product offering too – more details coming soon. Moving firmly into the lube oil market, Maine has orders from **Southern Lubricants** amongst others. By listening to customers’ needs, Maine has produced innovative ideas to make lube oil deliveries easier and cleaner for both operator and environment – that do not cost the earth.

www.mainetankers.com



Being alert to drowsiness

The European SafetyNet (2009) fatigue survey revealed that 60 % of all heavy vehicle drivers have experienced drowsiness behind the wheel. “It has been proven that it can be as dangerous to drive while tired, as it is to drive with alcohol in your bloodstream,” says Torbjörn Åkerstedt, sleep researcher and professor at Karolinska Institutet and the University of Stockholm.

In response, VolvoTrucks developed Driver Alert Support (DAS), a sensor-based system which detects when a driver is drifting off to sleep. If the driver shows symptoms of tiredness such as erratic or jerky driving, the system sends out both an audible warning and a visual signal.

“The system is invisible if you’re driving well,” says Peter Kronberg, who led the technical development of DAS. “However, when it makes itself known, it does so for a very good reason – to warn you that you’re a danger on the road and it’s time for you to do something about it.”

In the USA, a National Transportation Safety Board study reported that 52 % of single-vehicle accidents involving heavy trucks were fatigue-related; in nearly 18 % of cases, the driver admitted to falling asleep. www.nts.gov



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Consumer Rights Directive

Yet to be officially adopted, the **Consumer Rights Directive (CRD)** will apply to all contracts for goods/services from business to consumer. The CRD, which aims to clarify, strengthen and standardise consumer rights across the EU, is particularly targeted at distance and doorstep selling.

In EU States consumer contractual rights were previously covered by four different Directives; the CRD merges these into one set of rules. The changes take into account technological changes such as internet shopping.

Directive guarantees

- Clear information on price and additional charges/fees before they sign the contract – where customers are not informed upfront about extra costs and hidden charges, there is no obligation to pay. If monies are taken from them, they are entitled to a refund
- Increased protection against late delivery/non-delivery
- Strengthened consumer rights on cooling-off periods, returns, refunds, repairs, guarantees and unfair contract terms

The European Conference of Fuel Distributors (www.ecfd.eu) working with the Federation of Petroleum Suppliers secured two amendments for distance selling distributors after lobbying the European parliament.

1. Consumers are not allowed to withdraw orders of goods dependent on market fluctuations such as heating fuels
2. Written confirmation of a telephone order is not necessary prior to delivery

Environmental liabilities

New guidance to establish ecological baselines for the **EU Environmental Liabilities Directive (ELD)** has been issued. The ELD was implemented in 2009 and seeks to discourage the causing of environmental damage by applying stringent, remedial measures.

Bulk storage, petroleum manufacturing and depot facilities

The publication *Guidance on establishing a species and habitats baseline for the Environmental Damage/Liability Regulations 2009* was commissioned by the Energy Institute's Soil Waste and Groundwater Group and developed by ENVIRON. It provides guidance on establishing a species and habitat baseline and assists

environmental managers of petroleum manufacturing, bulk storage and other industry related facilities such as distribution depots, to comply with the ELD. Over time, the guidance will enable the creation of a living baseline, where local habitats and variations in species can be better understood.

The guidance comes in two parts: an introduction to the ELD and UK national regulations; and a detailed guide to establishing a species and habitats baseline. Samantha Deacon, senior consultant for ENVIRON, says: "The baseline condition is an operator's insurance policy against over or under-compensatory remedial action in the event of an incident."

Guidance on establishing a species and habitats baseline for the Environmental Damage/Liability Regulations 2009

Price: £82. ISBN: 978 0 85293 544 6

Introductory guide to environmental damage

Price: £15. ISBN: 978-0-85293-544-6

The publications can be ordered at www.energypublishing.org

Diabetes – new rules

Recent changes to the law will enable people with insulin treated diabetes to apply for vocational licences to drive buses or lorries.

Under new rules, which came into force on 15 November, drivers who would have previously been prevented from obtaining or driving a vocational licensed vehicle, will now have their applications considered by the Driver and Vehicle Licence Agency.

The changes follow last year's consultation on amendments to driver medical standards, which looked at standardising medical rules on diabetes, epilepsy and vision across the EU.

In order to apply for entitlement to drive Group 2 category vehicles, drivers who are treated with medication which carries a risk of inducing hypoglycaemia must meet the following criteria:-

- No severe hypoglycaemic event in the previous 12 months
- Full hypoglycaemic awareness
- Adequate control of the condition by regular blood glucose monitoring, at least twice daily and at times relevant to driving*
- An understanding of the risks of hypoglycaemia
- No other debarring complications of diabetes

*To demonstrate adequate control of the condition by regular blood glucose monitoring, the secretary of state's honorary medical advisory panel on diabetes mellitus has recommended that applicants with insulin treated diabetes will need to have used blood glucose meters with a memory function to measure and record blood glucose levels for at least three months prior to submitting their application.

ENERGY INSTITUTE

Aberdeen, Highlands and Islands

The Oyster 2 Wave Energy Project, 15 February, Robert Gordon University, Aberdeen

Presentation on shale gas exploration in the Bowland Basin, 21 February, the Marcliffe at Pitfodels, Aberdeen

The Great Crew Change debate, Copthorne Hotel, Aberdeen, 8 March
eiypn.ahi@gmail.com

AGM, The Marcliffe at Pitfodels, Aberdeen, 13 March

Essex and East Anglia

Presentation on compressed natural gas vehicles, refuelling facilities, and injection of biogas into the gas grid, Pegasus Club, Herd Lane, Corringham, 8 February
clivewalter@blueyonder.co.uk

Membership workshop, Pegasus Club, Herd Lane, Corringham, 7 March
clivewalter@blueyonder.co.uk

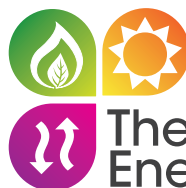
Annual dinner dance, Orsett Hall, Orsett, 16 March
Mark.Harrison@intertek.com

North Eastern
Visit to Northumbrian Water, 23 February, further details to be confirmed

Brake
Fleet Safety Forum Workshop – Reversing and blind spots, 7 February, Leeds
Best of best; the 9th annual Fleet Safety Forum conference, 28 February, Cranmore Park, Birmingham



18-19 April, Harrogate International Centre – the oil industry's largest, annual event.
www.fpsshow.co.uk



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17-18 October, Manchester Central

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WebEx

Managing road risk: back to basics: reviewing your fleet safety policies and procedures and making the business case for fleet safety to the board, 28 March
admin@brake.org.uk

ICIS World Base Oils and Lubricants Conference

23-24 February, Hilton Metropole, London
Covering base oils, lubricants and additives, this year's event is the 16th annual conference.

Ecobuild

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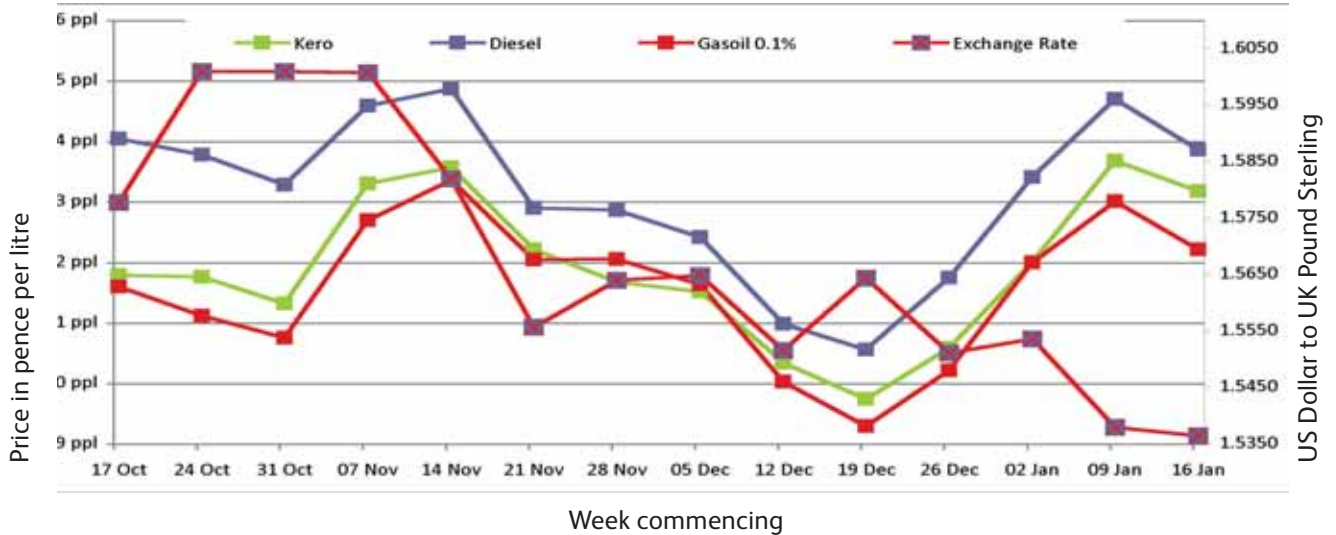


Wholesale price movements

12th December 2011 – 18th January 2012

	Kerosene	Diesel	Gasoil 0.1 %
Average price	51.56	52.50	51.14
Average daily change	0.43	0.52	0.50
Current duty	0.00	57.95	11.14
Total	51.56	110.45	62.28

All prices in pence per litre



	Highest price		Lowest price	
Kero	54.21 ppl	Thu 12 Jan 12	49.10 ppl	Mon 19 Dec 11
Diesel	55.32 ppl	Thu 12 Jan 12	49.65 ppl	Mon 19 Dec 11
Gasoil 0.1 %	53.55 ppl	Thu 12 Jan 12	48.56 ppl	Mon 19 Dec 11

	Biggest up day		Biggest down day	
Kero	+0.85 ppl	Wed 04 Jan 12	-0.91 ppl	Fri 13 Jan 12
Diesel	+0.95 ppl	Tue 03 Jan 12	-1.15 ppl	Fri 13 Jan 12
Gasoil 0.1 %	+1.21 ppl	Tue 03 Jan 12	-1.18 ppl	Fri 13 Jan 12



The Fuel Oil News Price Totem

	Trade average buying prices			Average selling prices		
	Kero	Gas oil	ULSD	Kero	Gas oil	ULSD
Platts	53.08	63.87	112.10			
Scotland	54.83	67.12	114.68	60.20	70.12	117.50
North East	55.00	67.04	114.53	59.44	70.14	117.64
North West	54.98	66.31	114.00	59.65	69.45	116.20
Midlands	54.02	65.41	112.87	57.67	67.81	115.36
South East	55.69	66.68	113.62	60.00	69.97	116.10
South West	55.42	66.96	114.70	59.63	69.56	116.90
N. Ireland	55.42	67.38	115.46	58.39	69.95	118.60
Republic of Ireland	73.34	78.95	120.38	77.21	81.13	121.40

The price totem figures are compiled from the results of a telephone survey of distributors carried out on the date shown. Buying prices are ex-rack. Selling prices are for 1000 litres of kero, 2500 litres of gas oil and 5000 litres of ULSD (Derv in ROI). Prices in ROI are in €. Date: 10/01/2012

The FON Price Totem includes Platts derived market data, supplied courtesy of Platts and BigOil.net. This allows distributors to make a comparison with the average buying prices.



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